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Remarks

The present Amendment and Response is submitted in reply to the Office Action mailed August 5, 2004. Claims 1, 2, 6, 9, 13, 16, 17, 19-22, 30, 31, 37-39, 43, 45, 49, 51, 52, and 54-57 were rejected. Claims 16, 27, 28, 51, 61 and 62 have been canceled. Claims 1, 2, 37 and 38 have been amended. Reexamination and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The undersigned attorney contacted the Examiner on November 2, 2005 to discuss the nature of the foam covering layer vs. the film covering layers in the cited references. No agreement was reached.

Claims 1, 37 and 38 have been amended to recite an uncured foam covering layer applied to the target elements that generally following the contour of the side edges. As best illustrated in Figure 22, the foam covering layer 372 conforms to the contour of the side edges 374. The specification on page 24, lines 11-29 discloses some possible methods for applying the uncured foam material to the stack of target elements.

The contour of the target face 376, however, is not necessarily dependent on the contour of the side edges 374. Claims 1, 37 and 38 have also been amended to recite that the foam covering layer is adapted to form a target face with a contour that is independent of the contour of the side edges of the target elements. For example, the target elements 326 in Figure 19 are illustrated as comprising a generally flat surface, while the target face 328 comprises a curved surface. Alternatively, the side edges 336 of the target elements 332 of Figure 20 comprise a curved surface, while the target face 340 comprises a generally flat surface. In the embodiments of Figures 19 and 20, the thickness of the foam covering layer varies across the target face.

Claim 37 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Pulkrabek in view of Desai. Pulkrabek discloses various films wrapped around the stack of target elements. Desai discloses a foamed plastic layer extruded into a fabric carrier. Neither of the cited references, however, disclose an uncured foam covering layer applied to the side edges of a stack of target elements. The films and foamed carriers in the cited references generally follow the contour of the side edges, whereas the uncured foam of the claimed invention is adapted to comprise a target face with a contour that is independent of the contour of the side edges of the target elements. Therefore, claim 37 distinguishes over the cited references and is in condition for allowance.

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Claims 1, 2, 6, 9, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 30, 31, 37, 38, 39, 43, 45, 49, 51, 52, 54, 55, 56, and 57 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Pulkrabek in view of Desai or Croll. Croll discloses a covering sheet 20 of a thermoplastic film extending along the target face. Again, none of the cited references disclose an uncured foam covering layer applied to the side edges of a stack of target elements. The films and foamed carriers in the cited references generally following a contour of the side edges. The uncured foam of the claimed invention, however, is adapted to comprise a target face with a contour that is independent of the contour of the side edges of the target elements. Therefore, claims 1, 37 and 38, and the claims that depend therefrom, distinguish over the cited references and are in condition for allowance.

No fee is believed to be necessary. However, should any fees be required, the Commissioner is authorized to charge these fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0029 and is requested to notify us of the same.

Respectfully Submitted,

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